



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava



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BSB command changes hands

"My charter here is really pretty simple"

Command of the 222nd Base Support Battalion changed hands Aug. 20 when Lt. Col. James E. Larsen took over the reigns from Lt. Col. Todd A. Buchs in a ceremony at 2 p.m. on the parade field next to the Rheinlander Convention Center.

After a little more than two years at the helm of the 222nd BSB, Buchs and his family move on to an assignment at U.S. Army Europe headquarters in Heidelberg.

Larsen comes to Baumholder from his most recent assignment in Baghdad, Iraq where he served as the Executive Officer, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, forward.

Larsen is an aviator by trade. His military carrier began in 1986 when he was commissioned an Army aviator upon graduation from the United States Military Academy at West Point.

At the change of command ceremony Larsen told the guests, "My charter here is really pretty simple. A lot of great work has already started. A lot of great things have been done to continuously improve the infrastructure on the installation.

"Relationships with the local community are excellent and all I want to do is continue that and allow Baumholder to maintain its rightful place as an Army Community of Excellence and a place where people want to come live and serve."

Larsen's first military assignment was in the Republic of Korea, where he served as an Aeroscout Section Leader for C Troop, 4th Squadron, 7th Cavalry, then as a Platoon Leader for C Troop, 5th Squadron, 17th Cavalry.

Larsen was then assigned to the 6th Cavalry Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas, where he served as the Brigade Headquarters Troop Executive Officer, the Intelligence Officer for the 1st Squadron, and later commanded the soldiers of the Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron.

Upon completion of the Aviation Officer's Advanced Course, Larsen served as an Aviation Observer/Controller at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, LA, followed by a tour as an Advisor to the Hawaii Army National Guard.

The Larsens were then assigned to Fort Stewart, GA, where he served as the Executive Officer for the 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, deploying to Kuwait for Operation INTRINSIC ACTION and to Bosnia-Herzegovina for SFOR 8. He then served as the Army Liaison Officer to the Commander, Amphibious Force, U.S. 7th Fleet, in Okinawa, Japan before his recent assignment to Baghdad.

Larsen is accompanied during his tour at Baumholder by his wife, the former Elizabeth Hagen of San Antonio, Texas, his son Jake, age 11, and daughter Grace, age 8.



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At Left, Command Sgt. Major Ann MacDaniels and 222nd Base Support Battalion staff members await orders during the change of command ceremony. Above left, Lt. Col. James E. Larsen receives the 222nd BSB colors from Col. Herman "Tracy" Williams III, 104th Area Support Group commander. Above, Larsen addresses the battalion and guests for the first time.

New leadership meets community

By LeAnne MacAllister
222nd Base Support Battalion

They may be the biggest events of the year in Baumholder. By the crowds of people, you would certainly think so. Germans and Americans spent the weekend of Aug. 20-22 celebrating together at the Old City Fest and World Championship Rally, formerly known as the Hunsrück Rally.

Having taken command at 2 p.m. on Aug. 20, Lt. Col. James E. Larsen, commander of the 222nd Base Support Battalion, joined by Col. Michael S. Tucker, 1st Armored Division Baumholder senior mission commander, celebrated with soldiers and residents alike.

Originally created to coincide with the Hunsrück Rally, the Baumholder Old City Fest is now in its 16th year. The entire town gathered for three days of festivities. "These events are a part of our tradition, even though the Hunsrück has become a part of the World Championship Rally. This is the biggest celebration Baumholder holds each year and it is very important to the city historically and economically," said Peter Lang, Baumholder city mayor.

The celebrations began with a keg tapping performed by guests of

honor — Tucker, Larsen, Mayor Lang and Fritz Körper, Federal Parliament of Germany member.

Festivities continued through late Sunday night; however a highlight of the weekend raced through Baumholder on Saturday.

Known to locals as the Hunsrück Rally for more than 25 years, the race was made a part of the World Rally Championship in 2002. It is a part of the OMV ADAC Rally Deutschland, and is the tenth of 16 WRC events this fall that include competition as far away as Australia.

Tucker and Larsen gathered with the community at Range 35 to watch the rally cars race around the curves of the Baumholder tank trails. A better view was available from the air, so Tucker and Larsen took to flight on a helicopter provided by rally officials.

Despite rain falling throughout the weekend, the festivities proved successful.

"This was a great opportunity to get to know some of the leadership of the local community and spend some time with them. I met a lot of great folks and I'm looking forward to establishing relationships. I'm extremely glad to be here," said Larsen.



Photo by LeAnne MacAllister



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Above, a rally competitor makes his way through a staging area before entering the track. Above right, Col. Michael S. Tucker, 1st Armored Division Baumholder senior mission commander taps a beer keg while Fritz Rudolf Körper, a state secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Interior, waits for the first drops of brew. At right, hundreds of spectators brave the weather and line the race course on Baumholder's military training area.



Photo by LeAnne MacAllister

Final vehicles, equipment trickle in

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

222nd Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

The Soldiers are all back and the last of their vehicles and equipment has trickled in through Baumholder's renovated railhead.

"It's been super, especially with the teamwork that we have with the Soldiers," said Iko Holzinger, 222nd Base Support Battalion director of logistics. The Soldiers are motivated. It's just different than it was before I think. They're very motivated. I don't know whether it has something to do with them coming back," he said.

The journey back was a long one for all the vehicles, equipment and the hand full of soldiers who accompanied the equipment on the ships. The trek began in Baghdad where all the equipment was packed up and road marched to Kuwait where the vehicles were cleaned up and underwent agricultural inspections before being loaded on ships.

"It's all going quite well, and that's because we're using the same teams. Before, different units unloaded the trains but now, these guys are briefed by me. They are briefed by V Corps and they always know what's going on."

Holzinger explained that when the ships arrive in Belgium, the equipment is placed on trains and railed to Aachen, where the German rail system takes over. Their trip through Germany is scheduled so as not to interfere with commercial rail. They arrive in Neunkirchen where the electrical trains are unhooked and diesel locomotives pull them on the final leg of their journey to Baumholder.

Once here, the new railhead system kicks in. "This new railhead is making it easier to conduct business. We have lights and everything for night operations," said Holzinger.

Night operations were possible before renovated but "We had these portable lights and they were just a pain...", said Holzinger.

Capacity has also increased. Whereas before the railhead had

the capability to off load two trains at once, three can now be off loaded within the railhead compound. "If we break the train, we can do three trains inside the compound, and we don't have to go outside and that helps with the security. This all depends on the length of the trains. Normally they're 25 to 30 cars with anywhere from 60 to 80 pieces of equipment.

It takes approximately three hours to unload a train. "The first thing we do is conduct a daily safety briefing and then we check the train out. We make sure everything was secured down range and we make sure that everything starts, if not, we crane it off."

Safety is a high priority during railhead operations. No one gets in without a helmet or a hard hat. "As I said, the first thing we do is conduct a safety briefing every day. We have deployment specialists from V Corps helping us, giving us guidance and also checking the trains out so we have a high safety standard," said Holzinger.

"It's all going quite well, and that's because we're using the same teams. Before, different units unloaded the trains but now, these guys are briefed by me. They are briefed by V Corps and they always know what's going on. It's always the same crew," said Holzinger.

"So it's like an airline. They know exactly the maintenance they've pulled. They load the baggage, they make sure the plane is refueled. But if you've got different crews all the time you've got to start all over with every crew," he said.

But whether the trains are laden with containers, wheeled vehicles, Bradleys or tanks, the renovated railhead is making life a lot easier for crews, cranes and coordinators.



Photos by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava



Railhead operations

Above, a medical vehicle is carefully loaded onto a flatbed truck under the watchful eye of contract transporters and 222nd Base Support Battalion safety officials. Safety is a high priority during railhead operations. At left, a Bradley Fighting Vehicle is guided into position for refueling after being unloaded from the train. The last train loaded with equipment returning from down range arrived Aug. 31.

Schools ready for academic year

By LeAnne MacAllister
222nd Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

Students head back to school on Sept. 7 and the Baumholder communities are busy preparing for their return. Registration is on going. Sports teams are forming and practicing. Schedules are set for fall.

Schools Officer Gene Winfrey estimates that the schools' registrations under his watchful eye - Smith, Wetzel and Neubrück Elementary Schools and Baumholder High School – are at 92 percent for the 2004-2005 academic year.

Pre-registration – registration for students who attended a school in this community in the previous academic year – takes place each April. However, there are always families that wait to pre-register until the last minute. The schools constantly accept these applications, although they encourage families to submit their forms early.

"It would help if everyone



Photo by LeAnne MacAllister
Dom Calabria

would register as soon as possible in order to staff the appropriate number of teachers needed for the pupil-teacher ratio," said Winfrey. Registration applications determine how many teachers each school is allocated.

All teachers returned the week of Aug. 23 and the official Teacher's Welcome Back reception was Aug. 27.

The Department of Defense Dependent Schools emphasis of "Math Matters" will be continued and expanded during the 2004-2005

academic year. Thirteen lab support classes will be held this school year at the high school. "The initiative is working," says Baumholder High School Principal Dom Calabria. "Fifty to 60 percent of kids have improved based on SAT/Terra Nova test scores, he said."

Fall sports are already in gear. Football practice began on Aug. 23 and other fall sports Baumholder students can look forward to include women's volleyball, golf, tennis and cross-country.

Baumholder American High School's open house is scheduled for Sept. 16 at 3:15 p.m. All elementary schools in the Baumholder community will hold their open houses Sept. 9.

Also important to note, all schools within the 222nd Base Support Battalion will be closed Sept. 10 for Baumholder's official welcome home ceremony and festivities for all soldiers who were deployed for the past 15 months.

Briefly

Baumholder sports

Basketball coaches, players and officials are needed for the upcoming season.

Officials are needed for boxing, wrestling and powerlifting.

Players, coaches, officials and teams are needed for the upcoming flag football season.

Combat cross country teams are being solicited for the championships that will take place in Darmstadt Oct. 23.

Coaches are needed for the boxing and wrestling teams.

Varsity basketball tryouts will be held Sept. 13 at the Hall of Champions for men and women teams. Civilians may participate. Coaches are needed for both teams.

Varsity flag football practice is conducted at Iron Soldier Field daily from 6-8 p.m.

For more information or to register for these activities call David Jefferson at Baumholder sports, mil 485-7176.

Job opportunity

Choctaw Management Services Enterprise is looking for applicants for the position of: Home Visitor Plus in Baumholder. Experience beyond graduation working with expectant mothers, new parents, families, infants, and children is required. For more, contact Sara Milbourne at mil 370-7840 or civ (06221) 57-7840, or email resume and cover letter to Sara.Milbourne@ima-e.army.mil.

APO closes

The Baumholder and Strassburg APOS will be closed Sept. 4 and 6 in observance of Labor Day: The APOs will resume normal working hours on Sept. 7. Questions or concerns may be addressed to 2nd Lt. Erika Stevenson at mil 485-6429 or civ (06783) 6-6429.